

Serial No.: 09/550,391

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 14-17 are pending in the application upon entry of this amendment. Independent claims 16 and 17 have been added herein. Favorable reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-7 and 14-15 were previously allowed, and the applicants paid the issue fee on June 1, 2004. However, applicant petitioned to withdraw the present application from issuance in order to have recently cited art from a corresponding Japanese patent application considered. Consideration of the references is respectfully requested.

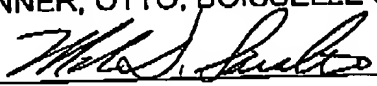
Further, new claims 16 and 17 have been added to define further the features of the invention. Consideration of claims 16 and 17 is also respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner feel that a telephone interview would be helpful to facilitate favorable prosecution of the above-identified application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

Should a petition for an extension of time be necessary for the timely reply to the outstanding Office Action (or if such a petition has been made and an additional extension is necessary), petition is hereby made and the Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees (including additional claim fees) to Deposit Account No. 18-0988.

Respectfully submitted,

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